

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 09729

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEC, YO
SUBJECT: EC-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS

REF: COPENHAGEN 3284 AND BRUSSELS 7334

1. DANISH AMBASSADOR GUNNAR RIBERHOLDT, CURRENTLY CHAIRMAN OF COREPER, TOLD ME MAY 19 THAT HE BELIEVES YUGOSLAVIA WILL BE DISCUSSED BY FOREIGN MINISTERS AT RETREAT SESSION THIS WEEKEND IN DENMARK. HE SAID I MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT YUGOSLAVS HAD JUST UPPED THE ANTE IN THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY. ALLOWING THAT I WAS INDEED INTERESTED, I ASKED FOR ELABORATION WHICH HE PROVIDED AFTER ASKING THAT HE BE PROTECTED AS THE SOURCE.

2. EARLIER THIS WEEK YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR JEVIC CALLED ON RIBERHOLDT TO EXPRESS HIS GOVERNMENT'S MOST SERIOUS CONCERN OVER THE CONDUCT OF NEGOTIATIONS SO FAR. HE SAID THAT THE MANDATE GIVEN THE COMMISSION BY THE COUNCIL WAS NO GOOD AND THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS WHICH THE COMMISSION WAS SEEKING AND THAT THE COUNCIL MIGHT GRANT WERE TOTALLY INSUFFICIENT. THE CONCEPTS ON WHICH THE COMMUNITY WAS
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PROCEEDING WERE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH WHAT YUGOSLAVIA HAS IN MIND. JEVIC POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED YUGOSLAV DRAFT OF AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN ESSENTIALLY IGNORED. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR WENT ON TO ELABORATE ON THE CONSTRAINTS ON YUGOSLAVIA ARISING FROM ITS RELATIONS WITH EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. HE THEN TOLD RIBERHOLDT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT'S VIEW WOULD BE SET FORTH IN LETTERS TO HEADS

OF THE NINE COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND TO COMMISSION PRESIDENT JENKINS. (IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHETHER THESE LETTERS HAVE BEEN SENT OR ARE TO BE SENT.) THE KICKER WAS, ACCORDING TO RIBERHOLDT, THAT IF THE COMMUNITY DID NOT CHANGE DIRECTION, THEN YUGOSLAVIA WOULD CONCLUDE THAT THERE WAS NO POINT IN CONTINUING THE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. RIBERHOLDT SAID HE HAD ASKED JEFTIC ONLY ONE QUESTION. DID YUGOSLAVIA WANT PREFERENTIAL ARRANGEMENT, TO WHICH JEFTIC HAD REPLIED NEITHER YES NOR NO. HE REFERRED AGAIN TO THE YUGOSLAV DRAFT AND SAID THE WAY TO PROCEED WOULD BE TO EXAMINE THAT DRAFT ARTICLE BY ARTICLE AND DETERMINE IN EACH CASE WHAT COULD BE DONE AND AFTER THAT PROCESS WAS COMPLETE, ONE WOULD LOOK AT THE RESULT AND DISCOVER THAT AN ENTIRELY SUI GENERIS RELATION WITH THE COMMUNITY HAD BEEN WORKED OUT FOR YUGOSLAVIA. RIBERHOLDT INTERPRETED THIS REPLY AS MEANING THAT YUGOSLAVIA WANTS PREFERENCES BUT WITH ANOTHER NAME.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE ALLEGED THREAT TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS IS NEWS TO ME, I CAN TESTIFY ON THE BASIS OF A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH JEFTIC THAT HE IS AN EXTREMELY FRUSTRATED NEGOTIATOR AND THAT HE TOLD ME THAT YUGOSLAVIA HAD PUT FORWARD 33 SPECIFIC PROPOSALS OF WHICH ONLY ONE OR TWO SEEMED TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. ALSO, SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME AGO, HAFERKAMP MENTIONED TO ME THAT THE

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TRICK IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE YUGOSLAVS WOULD BE TO FIND A WAY TO GRANT THEM TRADE PREFERENCES AND I HAVE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE COMMUNITY MECHANISM FOR DOING THIS IN A LIMITED WAY WOULD BE TO JIGGLE THEIR EXISTING GSP SCHEME, GIVEN BELGRADE'S PREVIOUS LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR AN EXPLICIT PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENT.

5. FINALLY, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT EMBASSY COPENHAGEN, DURING THE PROMISED DEBRIEFING (REFTEL A), ASK ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA IF NOTHING IS VOLUNTEERED. HINTON

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